

REMARKS

Claims 1-66 are pending in the present application. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

I. 35 U.S.C. § 121

The Office Action requires a restriction to one of the following sets of claims:

- I. Claims 1-22, drawn to a method for decentralized order matching, allegedly classified in class 705, subclass 26;
- II. Claims 23-44, drawn to a system for decentralized order matching, allegedly classified in class 705, subclass 26; and,
- III. Claims 45-66, drawn to a computer program product for decentralized order matching, allegedly classified in class 705, subclass 26.

In response to the Restriction Requirement, Applicant elects Invention III, **with traverse**.

For restriction to be proper, the Examiner must apply a two-pronged test. First, the inventions must be distinct. Second, the existence of multiple allegedly distinct inventions must present an undue burden on the Examiner. If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. See MPEP § 803.

Since the alleged inventions may be classified in the same class and subclass, the inventions have not acquired a separate status in the art as alleged in the Restriction Requirement. Therefore, the restriction is not proper. Certainly, a competent search of invention III would encompass the subject matter of inventions I and II. Thus, examining all of the alleged inventions would not present an undue burden on the examiner. As such, the existence of three allegedly distinct inventions does not present an undue burden on the Examiner at this point in prosecution.

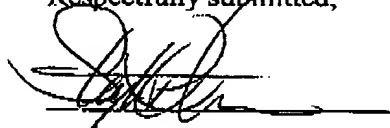
For the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: April 22, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen R. Tkacs
Reg. No. 46, 430
Yee & Associates, P.C.
P.O. Box 802333
Dallas, TX 75380
(972) 367-2001
Agent for Applicants